

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BANGKO 20122 282150Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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O 282041Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE NIACT 9411

S E C R E T BANGKOK 20122

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:

TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, TH

SUBJECT: THANOM'S RETURN

REF: STATE 283024

1. IN ABSENCE OF AMBASSADOR, WHO IS OUT OF THE CITY, FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN CALLED DCM AT 2230 HOURS SATURDAY DECEMBER 28 TO INFORM US THAT PRIME MINISTER HAD DECIDED THANOM SHOULD LEAVE IMMEDIATELY IN ORDER TO PREVENT SERIOUS DETERIORATION IN LAW AND ORDER SITUATION.

2. CHARUNPHAN THEN ASKED DCM WHETHER WE COULD TRANSPORT THANOM AND HIS WIFE OUT OF THAILAND ON A U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT WHICH WOULD BE GOING TO THE U.S. ANYWAY. DCM SAID THIS WOULD CREATE MOST SERIOUS PROBLEMS. IT WOULD FOCUS ATTENTION ON U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE AND U.S. USE OF THAI BASES IN A HIGHLY UNFAVORABLE WAY AND WOULD ALSO LEAVE US OPEN TO CHARGES BY STUDENTS AND OTHERS THAT WE HAD SPIRITED THANOM OUT OF THE COUNTRY. DCM NOTED THIS WAS A THAI PROBLEM AND COULD BEST BE HANDLED BY RTG ITSELF. CHARUNPHAN AGREED RTG WOULD DO SO, EITHER BY REGULAR COMMERCIAL FLIGHT OUT OF BANGKOK OR SPECIAL THAI INTERNATIONAL AIRLIFT.

3. IN REPLY TO QUESTION BY FOREIGN MINISTER, DCM SAID WE WOULD GRANT VISAS TO THANOM AND HIS IMMEDIATE FAMILY ON SAME BASIS AS IN OCTOBER 1973 IN RESPONSE TO OFFICIAL REQUEST FROM THE RTG.

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4. CHARUNPHAN CALLED BACK LATER TO SAY HE HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER FURTHER WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, THAT IT WAS AGREED THANOM AND HIS WIFE WOULD DEPART ON AIR SIAM FLIGHT LEAVING BANGKOK ABOUT 0800 HOURS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29 ENROUTE TO LOS ANGELES BY WAY OF HONG KONG, TOKYO AND HONOLULU. IN REPLY TO QUESTION CHARUNPHAN SAID MILITARY TRIBUNAL WHICH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER HAD ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY WOULD CONSIDER THANOM'S FATE WOULD DO SO THAT EVENING AND WOULD CONCLUDE THAT HE SHOULD LEAVE AT ONCE. THIS WOULD COMPLETE LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

5. VISAS WERE INSERTED IN PASSPORTS OF THANOM AND HIS WIFE AT 0300 HOURS DECEMBER 29. RTG APPARENTLY PLANS PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS DEPARTURE ABOUT 0900 HOURS AFTER DEPARTURE OF AIR SIAM FLIGHT. IF ASKED WE PLAN TO SAY WE HAVE ISSUED VISAS FOR U.S. IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST FROM RTG.
KINTNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EXILES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO20122
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740376-0795
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974126/aaaaafao.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 74 STATE 283024
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUN 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Aug-2002 by worrelsw>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2002 by MorefiRH>; WITHDRAWN <13 Jun 2005 by BoyleJA, PRIVACY>; RELEASED <22 JUN 2005 by papenddr>; APPROVED <23 JUN 2005 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THANOM'S RETURN
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, TH, (KITTIKACHORN, THANOM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005